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NOTES.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY FOR SYSTEMATIC PHILOSOPHY.

In the course of the discussion at the recent meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Professor Perry advanced a very clear and striking criticism of certain remarks that I had made with regard to the use of the genetic method in philosophy. As I had already spoken twice, I did not like to ask for the floor again, but promised him that I would put my reply in print.

What I had said was substantially as follows:

The attempt has been made (by Professor Schmidt) to distinguish sharply between philosophical analysis and the study of the history of philosophy. The distinction thus drawn may easily be misleading; for it loses sight of the fact that the history of philosophy affords us one of our most powerful methods of analysis—the genetic method. The conceptions which we employ in the interpretation of things are complex growths in which multitudes of assumptions lurk. If we accept these conceptions as ready-made instruments, we are so far in subjection to the past. The history of philosophy, tracing as it does the gradual development of these conceptions, and thus facilitating their analysis, is a great liberator. It helps to make us master of ourselves.—Not that the genetic method is indispensable. Many of the great philosophers of the past—Descartes, Spinoza, and Berkeley, for example—were very narrowly informed upon the history of philosophy. In fact, the history of philosophy, as we now understand it, is for the most part a creation of the nineteenth century. Before that time philosophy had only its chronicles. But this means that we have a great advantage over the thinkers of earlier centuries, an advantage which we ought not lightly to renounce. Nor would I say that every thinker of to-day is equally in need of historical study or equally capable of profiting by it. There are seventeenth and eighteenth century minds among us, and these will doubtless do their best work by the older methods. Moreover, the very vastness of the history of philosophy is such that it may often do a man more harm than good. It is easy to get swamped in it. And yet, when all admissions are made, we must say that to pursue philosophy without the constant aid of the history of philosophy is not to live up to the height of our time.

Professor Perry's criticism was to the following effect:

Judging from the analogy of the natural sciences, the history of which philosophy stands in need is not its own history but that of its object—say, of Being Anatomy, in order to analyze the adult brain, studies, not the development of anatomy, but the development of the brain. Surely we must distinguish between philosophy and the universe. The subject-matter of philosophy must

be prior to its history; and it is hardly credible that anyone would deny this with a clear consciousness of what he was saying.

To this I would reply:

The raw material of fact is doubtless older than, and logically prior to, philosophy and its history. But philosophy has almost nothing to do with raw material. The matter which it has to handle has been worked over again and again by common sense, by previous philosophy, and by special sciences which are themselves the products of philosophy.¹ It is thus not only not obvious, but decidedly false, that the subject-matter of philosophy is prior to its history. The history of philosophy is at the same time an essential part of the history of the process by which that material has assumed its present form, and may thus greatly facilitate its present analysis.

In a lesser degree the like is true of the special sciences; for these too have not simply to handle a raw material. In the common ruts of their daily procedure they need not stop to ask whence they have come but simply what they have before them. But in the midst of great crises, such as that in which mathematical physics has recently been involved—when old interpretations, which long seemed to possess imperishable truth, are suddenly called in question, and the whole scientific cosmos is disturbed—at such a time, when science is forced to be philosophical, a knowledge of the history of science has shown itself to be a most useful solvent of the difficulties of the situation. Witness the great address of Poincaré at St. Louis, on the principles of mathematical physics (printed by Dr. Halsted as an appendix to his translation of *Science and Hypothesis*). "This crisis, in fact," said Poincaré, "is not the first, and to understand it it is important to recall those which have preceded it;" and went on to give his illuminating account of the development of the science. But we need not limit ourselves to extreme cases. Just in proportion as the problems under consideration are fundamental to the science, is the history of science important for purposes of analysis. The histories of physics and chemistry and mathematics and medicine are not written simply to amuse or to edify, but to make men free. The industrious investigator who is ignorant of the development of his principles and his problems is in ten-fold danger of being the slave of the dead and not their fellow-worker.

It is not true, then, that the development which the dissector of the brain ought to study is that of the brain and not that of anatomy; he may easily stand in need of both—especially if he be not a subaltern, whose specific tasks are set him by his superiors, but a leader.

A word should be said with regard to the case of ethics. It was urged (by

¹ It is for this reason that one of the greatest of modern realists—Herbart—was able to maintain with much show of truth that *philosophy is the science of concepts*: that its business is simply to analyze the concepts which it receives from previous scientific or unscientific reflection, laying bare the hidden contradictions of which they are the crowded nests, and to reorganize them in systems from which (as a final goal) all contradiction shall have been eliminated. If this contention of Herbart was not altogether just, it was very nearly so. The part that philosophy plays in the direct interpretation of fact is very slight.

Professor Overstreet, as I remember) that the evolution with which the ethicist of to-day must be concerned is not the evolution of ethical theory but the evolution of morality. In my opinion this is an exceedingly one-sided statement. For in ethics, as much as in any other philosophical discipline, the broad questions of policy are still to be determined: the direction of interest, the subordination of problems, the adoption of working-hypotheses. It has not its rut laid out for it, in which it is to advance. Now for the determination of a wise general policy it is imperative that we be broad-minded and open-minded—that we do not go to meet the facts with a stiff and crude ready-made set of conceptions that warp them in advance, but make our conceptions plastic by critical analysis. For such analysis the history of the conceptions is an invaluable instrument. We should be on our guard against that spirit of self-confidence which plumes itself upon a direct and untrammelled study of the facts, unprejudiced by old idols and unhampered by worn-out controversies. For the truth generally is that such self-confidence leads to the hide-bound service of old idols, and that in setting aside ancient controversies it does not render itself superior to them.

What is it that has made Professor Perry take an opposite stand upon the matter? There are two motives, it seems to me, that have probably influenced him—and both are excellent, so far as they go. The first is that he has a contempt for pedantry, for the learning about learning, which has no grip upon facts. Now it looks very much as if, in the minds of not a few scholars, the history of philosophy has taken the place of philosophy, greatly to the degradation of both philosophy and its history. Against this he protests, and I believe that he is right in protesting. The second is that in the teaching of philosophy the history of opinions has frequently come to be all in all; so that students leave college with a very fair notion (for example) of Berkeley's theory of general ideas or of Kant's theory of the forms of space and time, while they have not the shadow of an opinion of their own upon either question. Against this too Professor Perry protests; and he further holds that the history of philosophy ought not to be used as an introduction to the subject—that the history cannot be studied with great profit until after the main problems of philosophy have been independently raised and discussed. As to the validity of this last contention I am not certain, but there is assuredly a good deal to be said for it. For the rest I believe that he is right. But it is clear that these considerations are far from being sufficient to warrant Professor Perry in the extreme position which he took in the debate at Columbia. Perhaps he said more than he would in a cool hour defend. I trust that I have not exaggerated what he said.

THEODORE DE LAGUNA.

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE.

It has been decided that the next annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association will be held at Yale University in conjunction with the meeting of the American Psychological Association. The problem of "Ex-

istence and Value" has been chosen as the subject of the 'Discussion,' which by vote of the Association, is to extend over two sessions. In order to further the plan outlined in the resolutions adopted at the New York meeting, the REVIEW is ready to publish articles on the subject of discussion, in so far as this can be done consistently with arrangements already made for the subsequent numbers of this year, and with its general policy.

Professor Bergson began a series of thirty lectures at Columbia University on February 3.

We give below a list of the articles in the current philosophical periodicals:

MIND, No. 85: *G. T. Ladd*, Rationalism and Empiricism; *S. Alexander*, Collective Willing and Truth; *M. M. Pattison Muir*, Alchemy and the Absolute; *G. H. Langley*, The Metaphysical Method of Herbart; Discussions: *B. Russell*, The Nature of Sense-Data.—A Reply to Dr. Dawes Hicks; *H. P. Cooke*, Ethics and the New Intuitionists; *F. C. S. Schiller*, Mysticism v. Intellectualism.

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS, IX, 26: The American Philosophical Association's Discussion: *Norman Kemp Smith*, How far is Agreement Possible in Philosophy?; *Walter B. Pitkin*, Is Agreement Desirable?; *Karl Schmidt*, Agreement.

X, 1: *Frederick J. E. Woodbridge*, The Deception of the Senses; *Gregory D. Walcott*, The Essentials of a First Course in Ethics.

X, 2: *Arthur O. Lovejoy*, On Some Novelties of the New Realism; *C. I. Lewis*, Realism and Subjectivism; Discussion: *Christine Ladd-Franklin*, The Antilogism—An Emendation.

THE MONIST, XXIII, 1: *Ernst Mach*, Psychic and Organic Life; *William Benjamin Smith*, Push? or Pull? Contrasted Views of the Nature Process; *Ellen Bliss Talbot*, Fichte's Conception of God; *Albert R. Chandler*, Tragic Effect in Sophocles Analyzed According to the Freudian Method; *T. Proctor Hall*, Scientific Theology; *Aristides Pratelle*, Atomistic Dynamism; Criticisms and Discussions: *B. H. Bode*, The Paradoxes of Pragmatism; *Ezra B. Crooks*, Professor James and the Psychology of Religion; *Madame Clémence Royer*; *Editor*, Theonomy (with reference to Dr. Hall's "Scientific Theology"); *P. E. B. Jourdain*, A Correction and Some Remarks; *Editor*, The Mechanistic Problem; *Editor*, Wrong Generalizations in Philosophy (Schopenhauer and Freud).

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BULLETIN, IX, 12: *C. H. Cooley*, Valuation as a Social Process; General Reviews and Summaries: *H. W. Crane*, Criminal Psychology.

X, 1: General Reviews and Summaries: *E. F. Buchner*, Psychological Progress in 1912; *W. T. Marvin*, General Problems: Mind and Body; *H. C. Warren*, Terminology; *H. C. Warren*, Bibliographical; *H. W. Chase*, Consciousness and the Unconscious; *H. S. Langfeld*, Text-Books and General Treatises; *C. E. Seashore*, Apparatus.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW, XX, 1: *Raymond Dodge*, Mental Work: A Study in Psycho Dynamics; *Isabel R. Rosanoff* and *A. J. Rosanoff*, A Study of Association in Children.

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY, XXIV, 1: *Raymond Dodge*, The Refractory Phase of the Protective Reflex Wink; *E. O. Finkenbinder*, The Curve of Forgetting; *Lillian J. Martin*, The Electrical Supply and certain additions to the Laboratory Equipment in the Stanford University Laboratory; *F. L. Wells*, Practice and the Work-Curve; *Theodore L. Smith*, Paramnesia in Daily Life; *E. K. Strong, Jr.*, A Comparison between Experimental Data and Clinical Results in Manic Depressive Insanity; *C. A. Ruckmich*, The Use of the Term *Function* in English Text-Books of Psychology; *E. B. Titchener*, Professor Martin on the Perky Experiments.

THE HIBBERT JOURNAL, XI, 2: *Viscount Haldane*, The Civic University; *Bishop of Carlyle*, Marriage and Divorce; *A. Mitchell Innes*, Love and the Law in the East; *Edward Thorpe*, Joseph Priestley; *Principal Forsyth*, Intellectualism and Faith; *George Coore*, Modernism and the Catholic Consciousness; *Hugh Walker*, Are "The Brains behind the Labour Revolt" All Wrong?; *C. G. Montefiore*, Modern Judaism and the Messianic Hope; *D. F. Harris*, Consciousness as a Cause of Neural Activity; *H. A. Overstreet*, The Democratic Conception of God; *R. S. Nolan*, Social Service. No. 6. The Needs of Discharged Prisoners.

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS, XXIII, 2: *R. M. MacIver*, Do Nations Grow Old?; *J. Laird*, Value and Obligation; *H. B. Reed*, The Combination *versus* the Consumer; *Charles W. Super*, Some Weak Points in Ancient Greek Ethics; *J. Dashiell Stoops*, The Institutional Self.

THE HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, VI, 1: *Henry S. Nash*, The Nature and Definition of Religion; *Josiah Royce*, George Fox as a Mystic; *Ernest F. Scott*, The Present Position of New Testament Theology; *John E. Boodin*, The Reinstatement of Teleology; *George Rowland Dodson*, The Relation of Plato to our Age and to the Ages.

THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, XI, 1: *J. Gresham Machen*, Christianity and Culture; *J. Ritchie Smith*, The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel; *C. Wistar Hodge*, The Witness of the Holy Spirit to the Bible; *Louis F. Benson*, Dr. Watt's "Renovation of Psalmody."

ARCHIV FÜR SYSTEMATISCHE PHILOSOPHIE, XVIII, 4: *Julius Fischer*, Die Entstehung des Geschmacks und seine Bedeutung für unsere Erkenntnis der Dinge; *Friedrich Boden*, Der Glaube an das Böse; *M. Siems*, Die ethischen Probleme unter strikter Logik; *Kurt Bernhard*, Die Relativität des Solipsismus; *Heinz Werner*, Ein Beitrag zur Lehre logischer Substitutionen.

VIERTELJAHRSSCHRIFT FÜR WISSENSCHAFTLICHE PHILOSOPHIE UND SOZIOLOGIE, XXXVI, 4: *Wilhelm Burkamp*, Biologische Bedeutung des Erkennens und Pragmatismus.

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR PSYCHOLOGIE UND PHYSIOLOGIE DER SINNESORGANE, LXIII, 4 u. 5: *G. Heymans*, In Sachen des psychischen Monismus (I. u. 2. Artikel); *Paul v. Liebermann* u. *Géza Révész*, Experimentelle Beiträge zur Orthosymphonie und zum Falschhören; *Paul v. Liebermann* u. *Géza Révész*, Über eine besondere Form des Falschhörens in tiefen Lagen.

LXIII, 6: *Kosta Todoroff*, Beiträge zur Lehre von der Beziehung zwischen Text und Komposition; *Alex Schackwitz*, Apparat zur Aufzeichnung der Augenbewegungen beim zusammenhängenden Lesen (Nystagmograph).

KANT-STUDIEN, XVII, 4: *Friedrich Kuntze*, Zum Gedächtnis an Henri Poincaré; *Fritz Münch*, Das Problem der Geschichtsphilosophie; *Oscar Ewald*, Die deutsche Philosophie im Jahre 1911; *Otto Baensch*, Textkritisches zu E. von Hartmanns "Kategorienlehre"; *E. von Aster*, Der I. Band des handschriftlichen Nachlasses Kants; *W. Reinecke*, Zur Erinnerung an Immanuel Kant (Besprechung der Königsberger Festschrift).

REVUE PHILOSOPHIQUE, XXXVII, 12: *F. Le Dantec*, La méthode pathologique et le langage actuel; *H. Robet*, La signification et la valeur du pragmatisme; *J. Pérès*, Vers une nouvelle conception du temps?

XXXVIII, 1: *J. De Gaultier*, La morale en fonction de la réalité; *E. Boirac*, Spiritisme et Cryptopsychie; *L. Arréat*, Signes et Symboles; Revue générale: *Benrubi*, Le deuxième congrès international d'éducation morale.

REVUE DE MÉTAPHYSIQUE ET DE MORALE, XX, 6: *V. Delbos*, Sur les premières conceptions philosophiques de Maine de Biran; *Ch. Dunan*, La nature de l'espace; *P. Masson-Oursel*, Esquisse d'une théorie comparée du Sorite; Études Critiques: *A. Mamelet*, La philosophie de Georg Simmel.

REVUE DE PHILOSOPHIE, XII, 12: *G. Melin*, La famille et l'évolution; *A. Diès*, La question Hippocratique (second article).

XIII, 1: *J. Pacheu*, L'amour mystique décrit et chanté par Jacopone de Todi; *G. Melin*, La famille et l'évolution (second article); *J. Bulliot*, Faut-il changer l'orientation de la Néo-Scolastique?; *E. Baron*, A Propos de l'idéalisme anglais contemporain.

REVUE NÉO-SCOLASTIQUE DE PHILOSOPHIE, XIX, No. 76: *J. Laminne*, Le principe de contradiction et le principe de causalité; *H. Lebrun*, Néo-Darwinisme et Néo-Lamarckisme; *D. Nys*, Le monisme; *J. Lemaire*, L'objet de la cosmologie; Programme des cours de l'Institut supérieur de Philosophie à Louvain (Année académique 1912-1913); *Agostino Gemelli*, Une orientation nouvelle de la néo-scolastique; *M. De Wulf*, Le mouvement néo-scolastique; *M. De Wulf*, Nécrologie. L. de Lantsheere.

RIVISTA DI FILOSOFIA, IV, 5: *Roberto Ardigò*, Le forme ascendenti della realtà come cosa e come azione e i diritti veri dello spirito; *A. Aliotta*, I gradi della libertà morale; *Balbino Giuliano*, Il Pensiero e l'Assoluto; *Benvenuto Donati*, Il valore della guerra e la filosofia di Eraclito; *Franz Weiss*, Note critiche alla "Filosofia della spirito" di Benedetto Croce.